



State of Utah
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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March 20, 1995

TO: Minerals File

FROM: Tony Gallegos, Reclamation Engineer *aa*

RE: Site Inspection, Morton International - Morton Salt, Grantsville Operations, M/045/037, Tooele County, Utah

Date of Inspection: March 17, 1995
Time of Inspection: 1430 - 1650
Conditions: Clear skies
Participants: Gary Price, Nate Tuttle, Morton Salt; Don C. Worthington, adjacent landowner; Wayne Hedberg, Tony Gallegos, DOGM

Purpose of Inspection: To examine Morton's main intake canal located on the southeast tip of Stansbury Island in response to Mr. Worthington's letter.

We met Mr. Price and Mr. Tuttle at the Morton plant offices. Mr. Price informed us their corporate office was researching the land ownership and right-of-way issue for the main intake canal area. Thus far, their research indicates they have a right-of-way agreement extending two rods in width from the centerline of the canal. A copy of the actual right-of-way agreement has not been found yet. Mr. Price stated he believed that their title policy indicates Morton presently owns the area encompassed under the right-of-way agreement. We informed Mr. Price that the purpose of this inspection was to determine if Mr. Worthington's written comments are of substance and warrant further action by the Division or Board.

We then drove to the intake canal area to meet Mr. Worthington. We first drove on the road north of the intake canal. This road leads to private property owned by Mr. Worthington and also property owned by Sixmile Ranch. The road crosses BLM lands and has a locked gate on the private portion. The road south of the canal is on Morton's property and leads to their pumping station.

Mr. Worthington and his family have a long association with the property in this area and the salt operations over the years. He informed us that he believed the original canal was first excavated around 1938. At that time, the canal would be better described as

a ditch. Around 1954 (could have been late 40's or early 50's) the ditch was apparently enlarged approximately to its existing size. Mr. Worthington believes his family sold approximately nine acres to the salt company around 1947. These nine acres made up the right-of-way along the canal route. Several salt companies have owned/operated this mining operation over the years. Sol Aire Salt built the salt processing plant in its present location around 1964.

We examined the canal area adjacent to Mr. Worthington's property in the NW/4 NW/4 sec. 35, T1N, R6W. This is where the gate on private property is located. At this location there was standing water in the canal. Mr. Price indicated the standing water was from snow and rainfall events or residual water left in the canal after Morton's pumping ceased last year. Morton usually pumps water into this canal from the end of March through September. Morton had not started pumping at the time of this inspection. At this location the canal is approximately 10-15 feet wide, 6-8 feet deep (from the surface elevation). The banks of the canal appear to have been built up using materials dredged from the canal or from other materials on site. The affected area of the canal from toe to toe of the bank outslope is approximately 20-25 feet in width. At this first location the canal is down gradient from Mr. Worthington's property. There were no obvious signs of surface salt crusting or vegetation damage due to salt seepage in this area. Vegetation in this area is mainly salt tolerant grass and shrub species. Photographs were taken of the canal and vegetation at this location.

We then drove further northeast along the road to examine a low spot/drainage in the NE/4 SE/4 Sec 26. This is the location of a small drainage basin. This area is lower than the adjacent topography; however it is believed to be higher in elevation than the canal. Mr. Worthington indicated that he believed this area may be showing some signs of vegetative stress that could be related to seepage from the adjacent canal. The canal was located approximately 75-100 feet from this topographic low. It was difficult to substantiate Mr. Worthington's assumption. It appeared that there may be some minor vegetative stress, but it could be attributed to the intermittent ponding of surface runoff from the local watershed drainage pattern. We found no evidence of salt crusting in this area. Photographs were taken of this area as well.

We then drove back to the main road intersection and turned onto the road south of the canal on Morton's property. Mr. Worthington did not accompany us on this portion of the inspection. We proceeded to Morton's pumping station located in the NW/4 Sec 25. Morton has not yet started pumping operations for this season. Photographs were taken of the pumping station.

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We then examined the south side of the canal in several locations. The lands south of the canal are down gradient and the canal bank is constructed of fill. Some signs of seepage through the canal bank are evident; however, the vegetation growing on the south canal bank did not appear to be suffering from salt seepage. Vegetation on the ground surface below the toe of the canal bank did appear to suffer from salt water seepage and/or inundation. Mr. Tuttle informed us this area is occasionally under water during operations. Photographs were taken of the canal's south bank and the associated vegetation.

In conclusion, there was no evidence of salt water seepage impacts to the vegetation on Mr. Worthington's property at the time of this inspection. There were signs of seepage in the south bank of the canal and damaged vegetation on the ground south of the canal. It was suggested that the site be revisited while Morton is pumping to look for signs of seepage when the canal is running at capacity.

We informed Mr. Price that we would present these findings to the Board at the next scheduled hearing and notify him of any decision. During the inspection we raised the point that reclamation of the intake canal is not included in the current mining and reclamation plan and this may need to be addressed. Mr. Price indicated Morton would continue searching for documentation of the right-of-way agreement or property sale.

jb

cc: Gary Price, Morton
Don Worthington, Landowner
Lowell Braxton, Associate Director, DOGM
Minerals Staff (route)

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